

Message Text

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ACTION AF-05

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FM AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9023

INFO AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY BANJUL

AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

AMEMBASSY COTONOU

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

UNCLAS ABIDJAN 4982

E O 11652: NA

TAGS: AFSP, APER, IV

SUBJ: VISAS FOR REGIONAL OFFICERS

1. ABIDJAN HAS 37 AMERICANS (NOT COUNTING PEACE CORPS STAFF) WHO HAVE REGIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES. THE NUMBER WILL GROW TO 43 WHEN THE REGIONAL SECURITY OFFICE BECOMES FULLY STAFFED. (22 REDSO, 6 RBFO, 4 RSO, 2 USIS, 2 RHUDO, 1 REGIONAL FISHERIES ATTACHE) THE REDSO AND RSO OFFICERS MUST TRAVEL FREQUENTLY, OFTEN ON URGENT BUSINESS.

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2. THE PROBLEM OF OBTAINING VISAS FOR THEM ON AN URGENT BASIS

IS A SERIOUS ONE, COMPLICATED BY THE FACT THAT SEVERAL OF THE COUNTRIES WHERE SERVICED POSTS ARE LOCATED DO NOT HAVE DIPLOMATIC OR CONSULAR REPRESENTATION IN ABIDJAN.

3. THE FRENCH EMBASSY, WHICH SERVICES NONREPRESENTED "FRANCOPHONE COUNTRIES," HAS REMONSTRATED AT OUR EXCESSIVE REQUESTS FOR "URGENT" SERVICE ON VISAS.

4. WE FEEL THE PROBLEM CAN AND SHOULD BE RESOLVED, OR AT LEAST IMPROVED, THROUGH DIPLOMATIC DEMARCHES BY OUR EMBASSIES IN THE SERVICED POSTS.

5. WHAT WE HAVE IN MIND IS FOR THE SERVICED POSTS TO POINT OUT TO THEIR HOST GOVERNMENTS THE FREQUENT NEED, OFTEN ON AN URGENT BASIS, OF THE SERVICES OF THE REDSO AND RSO OFFICERS BASED IN ABIDJAN. THEY SHOULD SEEK THEIR HOST GOVERNMENT'S AGREEMENT TO GRANT ONE YEAR MULTIPLE ENTRY VISAS FOR THE REDSO AND RSO STAFFS. FOR THOSE COUNTRIES REPRESENTED IN ABIDJAN THE VISAS COULD BE ISSUED BY THEIR EMBASSY OR CONSULATE HERE. FOR THOSE NOT REPRESENTED HERE THE ONE YEAR (OR LONGER) MULTIPLE ENTRY VISAS SHOULD BE ISSUED THE FIRST TIME THE REGIONAL OFFICERS COM TO THE SERVICED COUNTRY.

6. WE DO NOT CONSIDER THE ABOVE PROPOSAL UNREASONABLE, BUT ARE WILLING TO CONSIDER OTHER SUGGESTIONS OR COMMENTS FROM ADDRESSEE POSTS.

7. A SEPARATE TELEGRAM WILL DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM OF OFFICIAL TRAVELERS FROM WASHINGTON WHO ARRIVE IN ABIDJAN EXPECTING TO OBTAIN QUICK SERVICE VISAS FOR ONWARD STOPS.
SMITH

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